

The Sovereign Grace Messenger

A Publication of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

**“The Lord Hath Prepared His Throne In The Heavens;
And His Kingdom Ruleth Over All.”**

Issue 26

Psalm 103:19

Spring 2010

God's Glory and the Sovereignty of His Grace

Mark Webb

“And he (Moses) said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he (Jehovah) said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.” Exodus 33:18-19

The Setting

It was nothing short of a disaster! While Moses was up on Mt. Sinai meeting with God, receiving the Law that was to govern the new nation being formed, anarchy was breaking out below. The people, panicked at Moses' absence, prevail upon Aaron to make them new gods. Aaron readily complies, manufacturing two golden calves. Before long, this illicit worship degenerates into a veritable orgy as the people debase themselves before their new gods.

Moses is alerted to what's happening below by God himself. God throws out a solution: Let Him destroy the people, and He'll begin again with Moses and make of him a great nation. Backing away, we observe that God often gives such threats, not because it's His purpose to follow through with them, but in order to spur prayer and intercession from His servants. Such is the case here.

Moses' argument is that God must not do this—not because of anything good in Israel or that they're undeserving of such judgment, but because God's own reputation will suffer. The

Egyptians, says Moses, will slander Your name, accusing You of delivering them only so You could destroy them. Further, Moses reminds God of the promises He had sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the end, God complies, “repenting” of the evil He had said He would do.

Now Moses descends to the people to do ‘damage control’. He angrily confronts Aaron, who offers him a completely bogus explanation and lame excuse for what has transpired. Then he instructs the Levites to arm themselves and slay the perpetrators of this insurrection. Finally, on the next day,

Moses heads back up the mountain to see if there's any way to repair the damage done to the relationship between Israel and their God.

Moses begins by confessing Israel's sin to God and offering to be cast away for them. Yet God refuses this offer, stating instead that Moses is to go ahead and lead the people to the land He had promised them. However, God himself will not go with them. Seeing they are a ‘stiff-necked’ people, He's likely to destroy them all along the way. Instead, He'll send His angel with them.

To Moses, this concession isn't enough. Instead, he tenaciously beseeches God for two things. First, that God himself—not just His angel—will go with Israel. Moses had rather not move a step further without God himself going with His people. Second, he asks God to display to him His glory. This appears, under the circumstances, to be an inquiry by Moses into the nature and heart of God himself. Moses already knows of the power of God from the plagues sent upon Egypt. He also knows something of the holiness of God from the

**“Philosophers represent
the communication of happiness
as the chief end of man and of creation.
But the Scriptures uniformly declare
the glory of the Creator
as the paramount object
of all that takes place
throughout the vast limits
of the universe.”**

-Robert Haldane

Law he's just received. Further, he readily admits God's assessment of Israel as being a 'stiff-necked' people (see Ex. 34:9).

“And he (Moses) said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he (Jehovah) said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.” Exodus 33:18-19

Note the conclusion Paul draws from this quote in Romans 9:16: The determination of who will or will not be the recipients of God's

mercy is not based on man's "running" or "willing", but purely on the will of the God who is showing the mercy! Thus, the use Paul makes of Ex. 33:19 confirms our view that the text is declaring the general way God's mercy is dispensed in human history.

What Moses is probing for in his request appears to be an answer to this question: Can this holy and righteous God cohabit with a sinful, rebellious people? Can He be the God of a people who have already violated their covenant relationship with their God almost before it has even begun? And the odds are long that Israel will continue to sin. How then can such a relationship survive? Is there really any point to going on? The answer can only lie within the nature of God himself. He is a holy God—to that, there's no question. But is He a merciful, forgiving God? That's the question to which Moses seeks an answer.

God's Glory

This, then, is the historical setting of God proclaiming the fact that He will be gracious to whom He will be gracious, and show mercy to whom He will show mercy. It comes, contextually, as God is explaining to Moses what He is about to reveal and display to him. What follows is not so much a visible display of God's character (although I'm certain it was accompanied by visual effects), but is what some call a "verbal theophany." God's character is peculiarly made known to Moses as He communicates it to him (and us) in verbal propositions.

Many and varied have been the attempts by scholars to avoid the obvious import of these words! Some have appealed to the tactic of claiming that the tenses of the Hebrew verbs are mistranslated. They would render it, "I will be gracious to whom I have been gracious, and will show mercy on whom I have shown mercy." Rendered such, it reads as God's determination to continue to show grace to those He has begun to show grace, without respect to why He showed grace in the first place. But those far more expert in Hebrew than I state that this proposed rendering is incorrect.

Still other scholars state that this is not to be understood as a statement of God's general dealings with man. Rather, according to this view, it's only a statement of how God deals with Moses at this particular moment in time. In essence, such an understanding of the text implies that it's only this peculiar favor—namely, granting Moses' request for

a theophany—that is in view here. So, this would have God stating that the only reason He's granting Moses' request for a peek into His nature is because He desires to do so and not because of any merit inherent in Moses. Thus, it's simply a statement of how God is acting in this peculiar setting, and not a general statement of how He always acts.

Perhaps the easiest way to reply to these interpretations—at least, for those of us who



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hold to the inspiration and unity of Scripture—is to observe how Paul understood this text when he quotes it in Romans 9:15. Paul is in the midst of a discussion of how it is that God has blessed only a portion of the Jewish nation with salvation. While most Jews saw such blessing as guaranteed to them by birthright or by their obedience to the law, Paul shows that recipients of this promised blessing were not chosen based on anything God sees or foresees in man. His opponents—both then and now—shout "That's not fair!" Paul answers this by quoting Ex. 33:19 and shows that for God to bestow grace and favor in this way is entirely harmonious with what He reveals His nature to be.

Further, note that when God actually *does* proclaim His name in Ex. 34, it includes a declaration of His mercy and grace. Note Ex. 34:6: "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD GOD, *merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.*" (my emphases). This corresponds to what He had earlier said He was *going* to declare to Moses in Ex. 33:19. Why is this important? It shows that Ex. 33:19 isn't referring only to the way God is dealing with Moses at that moment, but to a way of dealing with man that is inherent to God's very nature and to something that comprises God's name! It discloses the general manner in which God bestows His grace to every man in every age.

Lastly, others point out that the statement itself is in the form of a Hebrew figure of speech called an "*idem per idem*", meaning "same for same". Several examples of such can be found in the Old Testament. In I Sam. 23:13, David and his men leave the village of Keilah and "go whithersoever they could go." In II Sam. 15:20, David seeks to persuade Ittai the Gittite to not flee Jerusalem with him by saying, "Seeing I go whither I may [go.]" In II Kings 8:1, Elisha says to the woman whose son he had spared, "Sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn." In each case this figure of speech means simply that they were to go where they themselves wanted to go. In other words, they were free to act as they wished. Thus, this same figure of speech found in Ex. 33:19 is an expression of the freedom of God to bestow His favor as He himself pleases.

Why Necessary?

One thing remains. We need to explore why God's sovereign freedom in bestowing grace and mercy is intrinsically part of His glory. To many, this connection is anything but obvious. In fact, to state that God is a God who bestows His grace sovereignly, without regard to the merit of the recipient, renders

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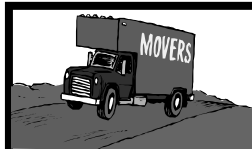
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Him anything but glorious in the eyes of many! They respond by ascribing, not glory, but injustice, wickedness, and tyranny to the name of God! How is it that such freedom is essential to God's glory?

It helps, I think, to consider what would be the case if God didn't have this freedom. If grace isn't bestowed on the basis of God's free choice—irrespective of what He sees or foresees in man—the only other alternative is that it comes in response to some good thing He *does* detect in man. Such an arrangement would strike right at the heart of "salvation by grace."

For man, it would mean that salvation isn't really a free gift of God's grace all, but that it's man's reward for some good thing. For if grace doesn't come to a man irrespective of what God sees in the man, the only other alternative is that God bestows it on the ground of something good that *is* in the man and bestows His grace due to something meritorious in the man himself. Such would be disastrous for us, seeing that there's nothing good or

meritorious to be found in lost man. But I would submit that the consequences of such an arrangement would be equally disastrous to the glory of God! Consider the following three things.

First, if God is no longer free in the dispensing of His favor—instead, responding to man's doing or choosing—the whole matter of whether or not salvation takes place is lost to the control of man! God, then, could really have no eternal purpose or plan, for whatever gracious thing He might propose would always be subject to man meeting the conditions of that grace. To plead that God can still plan and purpose because He foresees what men will do doesn't solve the problem, as He's still dependent on man's move before He can make His own move. As our dear brother, the late E.W. Johnson, used to remind us: "Saying 'sovereign grace' is a bit like saying 'country butter'—what other kind *is* there?" For if God doesn't have absolute freedom in the bestowal of His grace, He is then bound and controlled by man's will and subject to man's manipulation!

Further, God would no longer be in a situation where He is 'out front.' Paul declares in Rom. 11:35, if I may paraphrase, that no one has first given to God and then been repaid for it. He's stating a principle, flowing out of God's sovereignty over His grace, that states you can never beat God to the punch! If you choose Him, it's because He first chose you; if you know Him, it's because He foreknew you; and if you love Him, it's because He first loved you! For

one, absolutely no one—not even stiff-necked Israel or sinners like you and me—is beyond the scope of God's grace.

Conclusion

Recently, we've witnessed the earthquake in Haiti. Some have pointed out that the Haitians made a pact with the Devil in 1791. A group of rebels met with Voodoo priests and swore that if Satan gave them their independence from France, they would serve him. The insinuation is that this earthquake came as a retribution from God for their entering into that pact.

Certainly, such was a horrible thing to do—no question about it. For their rebellion was directed far more towards God than it was towards France. Does such render them liable to the righteous judgment of God? Of course it does! But does it mean that they are more wicked and more liable to the judgment of God than the rest of us? May I remind you: We've all made such a pact with the Devil! Our first parents repudiated God's rightful rule and bought into the Devil's lie, hook, line and sinker! We enter this life manifesting the same stiff-necked and rebellious behavior of Israel we've been witnessing. We've imbibed the same kind of idolatrous and self-centered worship as they. What hope is there for sinners like us? I'll tell you! There's a God in the heavens Who—in spite of us, irrespective of us—is still in the business of bestowing grace on the worst of sinners simply because He's pleased to do so! That's our hope for all men, whether Haitians or Americans!

Viewing this whole matter from the perspective of our sin makes quite a difference, doesn't it? For our own salvation is then grounded and secured, not in *our* works, not in *our* willingness, not in *our* constancy, but in God's! And, if this is so, then all the glory, all the credit, and all the praise belongs to Him for His saving work. God declares that to sovereignly bestow grace is intrinsic to His glory, and all those of us who receive this grace recognize it and respond by shouting "*To Him be glory both now and forever.*" ●

“What hope is there for sinners like us? I’ll tell you! There’s a God in the heavens Who—in spite of us, irrespective of us—is still in the business of bestowing grace on the worst of sinners simply because He’s pleased to do so!”
—Mark Webb

God *not* to be sovereign over His grace would mean God isn't an *initiator* but a *reactor*. For if God being God means He must always and only render favor based on what man does or doesn't do, He must always wait on man to act before He can act. The Creator, then, would always be behind the eight-ball of man the creature's actions.

Lastly, it might help us to place ourselves in Moses' shoes (or sandals). For God to declare Himself as One who always and only must bestow favor upon those who deserve it wouldn't have been 'good news' to Moses! Maybe that would have been okay had he been leading a righteous and holy people. But he has a stiff-necked, rebellious and disobedient people on his hands! They've just sinned a sin of such magnitude that Moses is unsure of whether it's in the capacity of this holy and righteous God to forgive or pardon it. Before taking another step forward, Moses wants to know if God can be gracious. In *that* context, I submit, there's no more wonderful message one could possibly hear than that God **can** be, **might** be, no, **will** be gracious to those to whom He will be gracious! It means that no

THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN HIS PERSON

DEAN OLIVE

I HAVE HAD many discussions with Jehovah Witnesses before, but I only engage in conversation with them on one subject – who is Jesus? Since they believe Jesus is a created angel or only a man at best, and not God in the flesh; and since the Bible clearly teaches that he is both God and man in one person, there isn't any need to talk about anything else. If they will not accept the teaching of the Bible on who Jesus is, they may have everything else right (which of course they do not), but error here is fatal.

John Newton got it right in a hymn he wrote based on Matthew 22:42, "What think ye of Christ?"

*What think you of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him.
As Jesus appears in your view,
As he is beloved or not;
So God is disposed to you,
And mercy or wrath are your lot.*

*Some take him a creature to be,
A man, or an angel at most;
Sure these have not feelings like me,
Nor know themselves wretched and lost;
So guilty, so helpless, am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Nor on his protection rely,
Unless I were sure he is God.*

Jesus Christ is unique. There is none like unto him! **Great my Jesus in His Person/ Great as God and man is He.** This is what makes Jesus great in his person; he is God and man. He is very God of very God and very man of very man. And if we are not right in this, as Newton said, we cannot be right in the rest.

The doctrine of Christ's person is certainly a mystery. Our minds cannot comprehend how one person can be equally God and equally man, but the Scriptures testify it is so. The apostle John, who along with the other disciples heard him, saw him, and touched him (1 John 1:1), said of him, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*" (John 1:1). And just a few sentences later he said, "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...*" (14).

These two verses taken together, John 1:1 and 14, set forth the truth vital to Christianity, that of the full deity and full humanity of Christ. Having a right view of the person of Christ is based on both doctrines. It is as important to get one truth right as it is the other.

We must affirm that he is the second person of the Trinity, the eternal Son, but we must also confirm equally that he was a man, genuine man, really and truly man. The gospel collapses if either the divinity or humanity of Christ is lost.

Conservative evangelicals, while affirming both, usually err by affirming more Christ's deity and have weaker views on his humanity. C. H. Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher of the 19th Century, said: "We can never forget that Jesus Christ is God. The church has given forth so many valiant confessions of His deity, and woe be to her should she even hesitate on that glorious truth. Yet sometimes she has need to insist earnestly on His humanity."

John 1:1 insists on our Lord's deity and John 1:14 insists on his humanity. Let's examine these two verses and learn more about the glory of the person of Christ.

JESUS CHRIST IS UNIQUE. THERE IS NONE LIKE UNTO HIM!

DEAN OLIVE

The opening verse of John's Gospel declares, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*" (1:1). The term translated "Word" is from the Greek word, *logos*. This is the term that John used to describe the Son of God who became man. There are three distinct truths set forth in v. 1 about the identity of the Word. J. I. Packer, in his excellent book, *Knowing God*, labels the three truths as the Word's eternity, personality, and deity.

The first statement, "*In the beginning was the Word,*" points to the Word's eternity. The Word existed when all other things began. The Word had no beginning and has no end. In the book of Revelation, John describes the Word as "*the Alpha and the Omega,*" *the one "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty"* (Rev. 1:8).

The second statement, "*and the Word was with God,*" points to the Word's personality. The Word is a person and this person was "*with God.*" This indicates that he is distinct from God, though he "stands in an eternal relation to God" (Packer). The Word, though divine, is clearly distinct from God the Father.

The last statement, "*and the Word was God,*" points to the Word's deity. "Though personally distinct from the Father, he is not a creature; he is divine in himself, as the Father is." The Word shares divinity with God. "The mystery with which this verse confronts

us is thus the mystery of personal distinctions within the unity of the Godhead" (Packer).

The Word is Jesus Christ, who is said to be a divine Person that existed from eternity. But when we scroll down a few verses in John 1, we read that "*the Word became flesh*" (14). It was the Word that was revealed in the incarnation as the second Person of the Triune Godhead. The co-equal, co-eternal Son, one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, became a man!

Who can fathom this? Who can comprehend it? God became man. Martin Luther said, "[Jesus] had eyes, ears, mouth, nose, chest, stomach, hands, and feet, just as you and I do. He took the breast. His mother nursed Him as any other child is nursed."

Nothing in the Bible is as mind-boggling as the Incarnation. But it is absolutely vital to believe. He is called "*the Word*" because he is the one who reveals God to men. A word is a vehicle of communication. God reveals himself to us through the spoken and written word.

Prophets spoke the word of God and apostles wrote the word of God (2 Peter 1:21). It is therefore fitting that the Son himself be called the Word.

When Jesus walked on earth he was God in the flesh; he was man revealing God. He dwelt among men and the glory of the only Son from the Father was manifested to men. While no man has seen God, they have seen Jesus, "*the only God, who is at the Father's side,*" for "*he has made him known*" (Jn 1:18, ESV).

John doesn't explain how the Word became flesh; he just says that he did. But Matthew and Luke tell us that the Word became a man through a virgin conception. The Lord Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit who came upon her and overshadowed her, thus bringing about the birth of the holy child who was called the Son of God (Luke 1:35). The divine and the human met in the conception of the child in Mary's womb. The result was a person who was and is both divine and human.

When the Eternal Son became a man he did not cease being God. He was no less God when he became a man. "He was not now God minus some elements of his deity, but God plus all that he had made his own by taking manhood to himself" (Packer).

When writing, John was facing a form of

(Continued on next page)

early Gnosticism that thought of Jesus as the Christ of God but denied the reality of his humanity. One of the earliest heresies that the church faced was the denial of the true humanity of Christ. This error is usually referred to as Docetism. The name comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear.

Donald Macleod says that the Docetics refused to believe “that God could in any real sense become man.” They had been influenced by Plato, who regarded everything material as evil, including the body. So they couldn’t accept the idea that God, who is pure spirit, could become man, for that would entail sinful existence. Macleod explains this particular form of heresy thusly: “Docetism rested on two fundamental principles: matter is evil, and the divine can experience neither change nor suffering. These principles obviously required a denial of the most cherished Christian beliefs. The Son of God could not be born of a human mother, and certainly not linked to her by an umbilical cord; nor could he suffer and die; nor take an ordinary flesh-and-blood body.”

The best known representatives of Docetism were Cerinthus, Ebion, Marcion and Valentinus. The best defenders of the New Testament against their errors were Irenaeus and Tertullian. The men who embraced Docetic views of Christ Jesus explained their positions differently.

For example, Cerinthus [100 AD] “drew a sharp distinction between Christ and Jesus. Jesus was an ordinary man, born of Mary in the usual way, possessing a fleshly body and crucified on the cross of Calvary. Christ, by contrast, was a heavenly being who came upon Jesus only at his baptism and left him before he was crucified. This meant that Christ, as such, derived nothing from Mary, had no personal connection with matter and experienced no physical pain” (Macleod).

Marcion [85-160 AD], on the other hand, “regarded the humanity of Christ as only a phantom. He had the appearance of a man, but this was a mere mask, and image without substance... His flesh had no reality, with the result, in the words of Tertullian, that he ‘was not what he appeared to be, and feigned himself being man.’” This too, just like the teaching of Cerinthus, nullified belief in both the cross and the resurrection.

Both of these views were seriously in error. They were contrary to the Scriptures. The Word became flesh. The eternal, divine Word became a real, genuine man. Other writers of the New Testament concur with John.

Paul stated the incarnation explicitly in Col.

2:9: “*For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.*” This is clearly an affirmation that Christ is both fully God and truly man. “He was not part man and part God, nor a mixture of both. Nor was He ‘God in a human skin.’ He had a human body, a human soul and a human mind...” (John Blanchard).

The writer of Hebrews said, “*Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things...*” (2:14). The “children” are those whom the Father had given to him to redeem (see v. 13). They are people made of flesh and blood. He partook of the same, i.e. he became a true human being!



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F. F. Bruce said, “No Docetic...Christ will satisfy their need of a Savior or God’s determination to supply that need. And if they, entering this earthly life by birth, leave it in due course by death, it was divinely fitting that he too should die. Indeed, this is stated here as the purpose of his incarnation—that he should die, and in the very act of dying draw the sting of death.”

The Scriptural view then is that the divine Son of God, the eternal Word, became a true and real man. He came in human nature. He came as one of us. If we say that he was a man upon whom God descended for a while and then later left, we are in error and are lost. If we say that he masqueraded as a man but wasn’t actually a man, we are in error and not Christian. Such teaching destroys the foundation of the Christian faith and comes from the father of lies, the devil.

There is no intermediate position. Either we confess Jesus to be the God-Man or we deny it. Refusal to accept the apostolic teaching on the Person of Christ is to deny the real Jesus. The Christ of the Bible is the Son of God who became a man. We may speak glow-

ingly of Christ but if we do not mean this Christ, then we are of another spirit; we have imbibed the spirit of antichrist.

Athanasius (300-373) and Arius (260-336) are two names that stand out in the history of Christianity. They were opponents in debate over the Person of Christ in the 3rd Century.

Athanasius argued that Jesus Christ was both God and man. He declared that Jesus was one person with two natures, that he was very God of very God and very man of very man. He wrote, “Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man...perfect God, and perfect man...who although he be God and man: yet he is not two, but one Christ; one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the manhood into God” (*The Athanasian Creed*).

Arius, on the other hand, argued that Jesus Christ was a created being, a high order of angels, who came to earth as a man, a really good man and better than all others, but still, just a man. He denied the deity of Jesus. Arius said, “...the Son has a beginning, but...God is without beginning...[the Son] is of the non-existent...He is neither part of God, nor of any essential being.”

Christians believe that Athanasius rightly interpreted the Scriptures. He is regarded as a champion of orthodox Christology in the early church. Jehovah Witnesses and other cults believe that Arius rightly interpreted the Scriptures. But Arius was a heretic, the promoter of soul-damning doctrine.

Both positions cannot be right. Either Athanasius was right or Arius was right. One of them is wrong, dreadfully and terribly wrong. Orthodox Christianity was affirmed by Athanasius and the truth of the person of Christ has continued to be affirmed through the present day, though there are still many who deny either his humanity or his deity.

The gospel of salvation rests on a right belief of the person of Christ. John Blanchard says, “The Bible gives resounding emphasis..., making it crystal clear that Jesus of Nazareth is both fully God and fully man, and that both His divine and human natures, united in one person, are absolutely essential to the gospel and therefore to man’s salvation.”

O, the glory of the person of Christ! Paul said, “*For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*” (1 Cor. 2:2). In one breath he affirmed the vital necessity of the person (Jesus Christ) and work (crucified) of the God-man. May we ourselves determine not to know anything else either and glory in both the person and work of Christ. ●

The Glory of God in the Gospel

Ron Staley

*"The glorious gospel of the
blessed God." (1 Timothy 1:11)*

WHAT IS THE supreme purpose of the one true gospel of the Son of God? Is its greatest importance the saving of the soul from sin and eternal destruction? Certainly the sinner brought under the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit would agree that he has heard the best news that could ever be heard. Only eternity will reveal the full blessedness of those brought by sovereign grace to know and believe who Jesus Christ is and in repentance from sin trust Him alone and His finished work of redemption. But is there a purpose in the gospel that is more important than our salvation? Relying on the sole authority of Scripture, the proposition of this article is to show that there is. Certainly, it must be considered within the supreme purpose of all of God's creative, providential and saving work: *"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen"* (Romans 11:36). More particularly, it involves the highest manifestation of the glory of God as revealed in the gospel of His Son. In the Biblical gospel, the glory of God is more important than our salvation. And how is that glory manifested in the gospel? That it indeed is so is expressed by the way Paul the apostle describes it in 1 Timothy 1:11. Berry's Greek-English Interlinear, which is based upon the received Greek text known as the "Textus Receptus," translates: *"the glad tidings of the glory of the blessed God."*

There is a light that streams forth from the gospel revealed in Scripture – a blazing forth of the glory of God – and it is all tied to the very blessedness of God. It contradicts fallen human reason, sets forth that wondrous glory in a way man would have never devised, will eventually be recognized by both the saved and the perishing, but is now only beheld by those with the inward sight of faith – anointed eyes that behold *"the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"* (2 Corinthians 4:6).

In a general way, we may say that the glory of God is manifested in whatever way *"the God of glory"* is pleased to shine forth and display His glorious character. The whole created order – *"the world and all that is*

therein;" the vast heavens declaring *"the glory of God"* – all of which display *"His eternal power and Godhead,"* are a lesser shining forth of that glory than is to be found in the gospel. Long ages ago, Job observed the whole creation as only *"parts of his ways,"* then adds, *"but how little a portion is heard of him?"* (Job 26:14) Even now with all the high-tech capacity of the Hubble Telescope, only a very small portion of our vast universe can be seen. So how is it that in the gospel there is yet a higher revelation of the glory of God than all the created expanse of the universe with its innumerable stars and planets? The *"glorious gospel,"* or *"the glad tidings of the glory of the blessed God,"* sets forth a glory described as "the sum total of the light that streams forth from the presence and self-manifestation of God."

Where is the Glory of God in the Gospel?

The gospel, once despised by Saul of Tarsus, transformed that most zealous advocate of Judaism into the most fervent of all proclaimers of Christ and His victorious cross. He was not only a preacher of it but living proof of it (1 Timothy 1:12-16). That transforming knowledge turned Paul from sin and self-glory and caused him to count all former gain in this world as nothing in comparison. Moreover, it caused him to give up all thought of his own righteousness for *"the righteousness which is of God by faith,"* through, as he says, *"the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord"* (Philippians 3:7-9). Is not this the great key to understanding the glory of God in the gospel? This gospel, *"the glad tidings of the glory of the blessed God,"* he calls in 2 Corinthians 4:6, again from Berry's Interlinear, *"[the] radiancy of the knowledge of the glory of God in [the] face of Jesus Christ."*

Much like the *"glad tidings"* in Paul's description of the gospel, O.T. prophecy associates the glory of God with the spread of *"good tidings."* The prophetic promise of God through Isaiah was that *"the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it"* (Isaiah 40:5). Significantly, *"all flesh,"* means that all kinds of people from every nation and race were destined to see this glory. The prophecy pre-announces the ministry of John the Baptist as the way-preparer, and in its fulfillment interprets, *"And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."* (Isaiah 40:3; Luke 3:1-6). The message that was to then go forth from Zion – the *"good tidings"* and the glory in it – was, *"Behold your God"* (Isaiah 40:10). The *"voice"* of the way-preparer would cry,

"Prepare ye the way of the LORD (Jehovah)." (Isaiah 40:3) But how is this revelation of "the glory of the Lord," with the message "Behold your God," to be fulfilled?

Strange as it may seem to some, the gospel that reveals the glory of God is all about a Man. It would indeed seem strange to some to tell them that the glory of God is revealed in the gospel, but when they read the gospel they find that it is the record of a Man. A Man who was born in poverty, lived His first thirty years in obscurity, was despised and rejected of men even though *"Never man spake like this man"*! A Man who performed many wondrous miracles that could not be denied even by His enemies (John 11:47-48)! A Man who at the end of His course in the world would die an ignominious and cruel death at the hands of those who hated Him! A Man who could have called legions of angels to destroy His enemies and deliver Him from that death, who rather *"when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not"*! Yet herein is revealed the zenith, the loftiest conception of God's glory, in a Man in whom is displayed the highest point of all the revelation of the glory of God!

To those with eyes to see, the message prophesied to come in Isaiah, *"Behold your God,"* is absolutely consistent with the message of John the Baptist, *"Behold the Lamb of God."* He who from all eternity bore the nature, power and glory of God; He who is equal in deity with the Father and the Holy Spirit, *"in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily"* (Colossians 2:9) could alone cry, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"* (John 14:9). *"The Lamb of God"* is the unique *"Son of God,"* He is *"the Christ,"* who pronounced a blessing upon those who, not seeing with physical sight but beholding with spiritual sight, recognize Jesus of Nazareth as *"My Lord, and my God."*

What riches, what a vast and incomparable storehouse of God's glory, all comprehensive in one Man! What power, the power of grace, the power of mercy delighted in, the power to save, the glory of God's power, is to be found in the cross! (1 Corinthians 1:18) To hearts who have been regenerated by His grace, this is the display of the greatest love there is, and glorifies God in our hearts above all else. What God's justice demanded as payment for our sins, God's love provided in Jesus Christ: *"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8). To those brought to be broken over sin, who in true contrition and repentance look only to *"Jesus*

"In the Biblical gospel, the glory of God is more important than our salvation." -Ron Staley

Christ and Him crucified" for their salvation, they know that in beholding the Lamb of God they are beholding their God.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"

Charles D. Alexander, now with the Lord, was a pastor and prolific writer. It was my privilege to know him and call him my friend. I owe him a personal debt for the profound and godly influence he exerted on my own ministry in its early days. The following quotation is taken from his work on the Book of Revelation, chapter 5:

"The secret of the Godhead is not in power, but in humility, meekness, mercy and love. THIS is 'sovereign grace.' Divine sovereignty is not a mighty engine rolling down the avenue of history like some monstrous juggernaut crushing and mangling all in its ruthless path. The Lord God overcomes not by strength but by humility and weakness. He submits to death and shame and suffering. He rides to His enthronement on an ass. *'Behold, thy king cometh,'* cries the prophet, *'riding upon an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass.'* Behold therefore your God! This is the absent page from most theologies - the meekness and humility of God. *'I am meek and lowly in heart - therefore, learn of me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls'*

Herein lies the problem of the moral creation. This is what John sees in our chapter of the Seven-Sealed Book. Behind the appearance of Christ as both Lion and Lamb, we see the answer to the great question which is suspended over the name, the goodness and the selflessness of God. Here is the Fall of Lucifer, and the intrusion of evil into creation. Satan attributes to God the prick and independence of his own darkened, fallen spirit. Written over Lucifer's history are the words, *'Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself.'* (Psalm 50:21)

The slander of Satan is that God's rule is coercive and unjust, that it overrides the will of the creature and that God is therefore the sole creator of evil. The Lord repels the lie and destroys Satan not by almighty power (which would only have proven that Satan's theology was correct) but by submitting Himself to Satan's power so as to overcome by weakness, suffering the penalty of death (which Satan has brought into the universe) and paying the debt of suffering earned by the disobedience of others.

Thus the Lord establishes the law of creation on His own unchangeable nature

of holy love, and raises a new creation out of the grave of the old - a moral creation which can never be altered or fail because in it a unity is created of God and man, in the divine Spirit, through God having become Man.

Satan's sin sprang from his revolt against his fate: his repulsion of his subordination to the creature man, who though created after the angels was destined to rule over all as the regent of the Invisible God. What Satan did not know was that



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through his own act of rebellion he would bring about that very situation in which man's destiny would be realized by God becoming Man and proving by suffering and death and humble obedience His own worthiness to be Creator and King over all."

The End Purpose of God's Glorious Salvation

The gospel, as it is revealed in Scripture, is God-centered. Sadly, the gospel preached by so much of what is termed "Evangelicalism" or "Fundamentalism" is man-centered. It has man and his conception of salvation as its chief end. The will of man is the leading factor, or at least a cooperating factor, in bringing about the new birth. It holds out the promise of forgiveness of sins for the purpose of escaping hell and gaining heaven. Whatever methods work to the bringing about of a "decision for Christ" takes precedence over Biblical theology, exegesis and exposition. The impotent Jesus it preaches is not able to save unless man exercises the sovereignty of his so-called "free will." Man is central, his concept of salvation more important than anything else, and his eternal happiness the great end of it all. Those who believe these things can sing hymns of praise

and worship without ever knowing what true worship is all about. They often make much of ecstatic and feel-good experiences while failing to understand that God's glory is the end purpose of His salvation.

How strange it sounds to some to say, "God's glory is more important than our salvation." Preachers, missionaries, and witnessing believers are to have this purpose as supreme. The end purpose of salvation, as revealed in Scripture, is for this purpose. God chose a people in Christ before the world, calls them through the gospel, saves them, brings them to Himself, leads them to holiness, only *"according to the good pleasure of his will,"* for a supreme end - *"to the praise of the glory of His grace."* (Ephesians 1:3-6)

Having been privileged to speak in conferences many times with Pastor Gene Breed of Grace Baptist Church in Jonesboro, Georgia, and having heard many challenging messages brought through him, one stands out above all in my mind. The major points of it are quite worth considering. He was speaking on God's priorities in the cross, as drawn from the first verses of the Lord's high priestly prayer in John 17:1-3. The points were taken from the order in the Lord's prayer and proceeded from the very first petition. Priority one, the glory of God: *"Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee."* Priority two, the Lordship of Jesus Christ: *"As thou hast given him power over all flesh."* Priority last and third, the salvation of the elect: *"that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."* In referencing 1 Pe.2:19-21 Pastor Breed made the significant comment, "If we do not see the glory of God as pre-eminent at the cross of the Lord, we certainly shall miss the true blessedness of our own!"

Arthur W. Pink wrote an article on "Present Day Evangelism," and though written many years ago it is still as applicable, maybe even more so, today. In it he wrote:

"If the evangelist fails to make the *glory of God* his paramount and constant aim, he is certain to go wrong, and all his efforts will be more or less a beating of the air. When he makes an end of anything less than that, he is sure to fall into error, for he no longer gives God His proper place. Once we fix on ends of our own, we are ready to adopt means of our own. It was at this very point evangelism failed two or three generations ago, and from that point it has farther and farther departed. Evangelism made 'the winning of souls' its goal, its summum bonum, and everything else was made to serve and pay tribute to the same. Though the glory of God was not actually denied, yet it was lost sight of, crowded out, made

secondary. Further, let it be remembered that God is honored in exact proportion as the preacher cleaves to His Word, and faithfully proclaims 'all His counsel,' and not merely those portions which appeal to him.

To say nothing here about those cheap-jack evangelists who aim no higher than rushing people into making a formal profession of faith in order that the membership of the churches may be swelled, take those who are inspired by a genuine compassion and deep concern for the perishing, who earnestly long and zealously endeavor to deliver souls from the wrath to come, yet unless they be much on their guard, they too will inevitably err. Unless they steadily view conversion in the way God does — as the way in which He is to be glorified — they will quickly begin to compromise in the means they employ. The feverish urge of modern evangelism is not how to promote the glory of the triune Jehovah, but how to multiply conversions. The whole current of evangelical activity during the past fifty years has taken that direction. Losing sight of God's end, the churches have devised means of their own.

Bent on attaining a certain desired object, the energy of the flesh has been given free rein; and supposing that the object was right, evangelists have concluded that nothing could be wrong which contributed unto the securing of that end; and since their efforts appear to be eminently successful, only too many churches silently acquiesced, telling themselves 'the end justified the means.' Instead of examining the plans proposed and the methods adopted by the light of Scripture, they were tacitly accepted on the ground of expediency. The evangelist was esteemed not for the soundness of his message, but by the visible 'results' he secured. He was valued not according to how far his preaching honored God, but by how many souls were supposedly converted under it.

Once a man makes the conversion of sinners his prime design and all-consuming end, he is exceedingly apt to adopt a wrong course. Instead of striving to preach the Truth in all its purity, he will tone it down so as to make it more palatable to the unregenerate. Impelled by a single force, moving in one fixed direction, his object is to make conver-

sion easy, and therefore favorite passages (like John 3:16) are dwelt upon incessantly, while others are ignored or pared away. It inevitably reacts upon his own theology, and various verses in the Word are shunned, if not repudiated. What place will he give in his thought to such declarations as '*Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?*' (Jer. 13:23), '*No man can come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him*' (John 6:44), '*Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you*' (John 15:14)?

“What riches, what a vast and incomparable storehouse of God’s glory, all comprehensive in one Man! What power, the power of grace, the power of mercy delighted in, the power to save, the glory of God’s power, is to be found in the cross!”

-Ron Staley

He will be sorely tempted to modify the truth of God's sovereign election, of Christ's particular redemption, of the imperative necessity for the supernatural operations of the Holy Spirit."

"Final Acclaim of Universal Creation"

In conclusion, I again quote from the aforementioned Charles D. Alexander's commentary on Revelation 5:13-14. It is fitting that we consider the consummate glory to be given to God, by saved and lost alike, when the purpose of God in salvation is completed.

"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."

"No, there is no hint here of modern universalism with its teaching of general salvation for all the impenitent, including the devils in hell. This verse expresses the unanimity of all creation in the acknowledgment of the Triune God, revealed in Christ, as to the fitness

of the Godhead to be Creator and Ruler of all things. Let no one mistake the true and far-reaching meaning of these words. As the apostle Paul had earlier declared that at the name of Jesus every knee must bow, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9-11) so we are to understand that when all God's purposes are consummated, all creation will acknowledge that no imputation lies at the door of deity as touching God's integrity in holiness and truth. The original lie is laid [to rest] for ever. The devil knows that he is wrong, and the final verdict of the judgment seat will be received and must be received, in all its righteousness and worth, by every creature in all the universe. The name of Christ must reign in hell just as surely as it reigns in heaven. Every tongue which has spoken against God will be silent. Nothing can ever again be spoken against the truth of God.

In hell, as in heaven, every knee must bow at the name of Jesus.

There can be no dissent in any part of God's creation. Evil as an active element is abolished for ever, and will not arise a second time to trouble creation. The eternal state will in fact be eternal. The time of probation is over. Blessing and honour and glory and power are ascribed for ever unto Him who sits on the throne and unto the Lamb. The association of the designation '*the Lamb*' with the throne of God is indicative of that divine atonement achieved by Christ, through which the reconciling of all things has become cosmic in its extent. This does not mean - and we again repudiate any suggestion that it ever can mean - a universal restorationism; it can only mean the assent of all creation to the divine integrity, and the recognition that the death of Christ has proved fully and finally that the Being of God is unchangeable, perfect, and holy LOVE. It is of highest significance that the man without the wedding garment was speechless (Matthew 22:12) - that is, he is forever convinced of the true judgment of God and finds nothing to say against it, but rather in heart and conscience approves, even to his own everlasting shame."

"To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen." (Romans 16:27)●

THE 'CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC' style of worship has now captured countless congregations of every theological hue throughout the world, though not without many a battle. At times the controversy has become so heated it has been dubbed 'the worship wars.' As a rule the chief strategy employed by the advocates of new worship has been to reduce the entire debate to a matter of taste, style and generation.

'Traditionalists' are sometimes charged with a selfish refusal to adjust to changing culture. They have even been called the Pharisees of the 21st-century church, who are guilty of obstructing a great forward-movement of God's people and forcing division over non-essentials. For all this, large numbers of churches still hold out against the new ways, believing that great principles are at stake.

The trouble with the rhetoric of those advocating new worship is that they seem not to recognise, let alone discuss, historic, biblical principles of worship. It is as if there is nothing much about worship in the Bible. It is as if the Reformation never reformed worship, articulating great concepts about how we should approach the living God. It is as though the bedrock definitions held over centuries have become invisible and non-existent. Where have these priceless and vital principles gone? Why are they hardly ever discussed? Do the advocates of new worship wilfully avoid them, or are they genuinely unaware of them? Certainly, it is an astonishing scene to find them passed over so easily.

The sixty-plus generation of believers remember that these principles were still being taught in their youth, but not any more. New definitions of worship have appeared which would never have been accepted as recently as fifty years ago – definitions which smash down the central principles of evangelical, Protestant Christian worship, taking us back to medieval and Catholic thinking. These chapters will identify three major deviations from biblical standards (as recovered at the Reformation) typical of the entire modern worship movement.

Churches that have adopted modern worship songs and music to only a limited degree must take account of the deeply significant errors which govern the writers and composers of the new genre. Moderate users of new worship plug into a radically deviant philosophy of worship and so train their people (possibly unwittingly) to accept pre-Reformation ideas, and eventually, the full-

¹ SPIRITUAL OR AESTHETIC WORSHIP? DR. PETER MASTERS

blown contemporary scene. This is not a complex and theoretical matter: it is straightforward and vital. We must know what worship is supposed to be, and we must assess the new style in the light of God-given principles.

Three broken principles

I – Spiritual or aesthetic worship? Our first major deviation is the espousal of *aesthetic worship*, in preference to the Lord's requirement that worship must exclusively be 'in spirit and in truth' (see *John 4.23-24*). 'In spirit' makes worship a product of heart and soul. Aesthetic worship, by contrast, is the idea that things that are beautiful, artistic or skilfully executed should be offered up as an expression of worship to God. It is based on the notion that we worship not just with spiritual thoughts from our minds and hearts, but also with the creative skill of our minds and hands.

Aesthetic worshippers believe that genuine praise needs a 'physical' dimension greater than mere unison singing. It assumes that God is an 'aesthete' – sitting in the heavens and looking down with appreciation at the skill and beauty that we bring before Him. We may bring Him thrilling music, clever arrangements, brilliant instrumentalism and fine singing, and these will please Him. We may worship (it is thought) not only by meaningful words, but by wordless offerings.

This is of immense importance, because the *aesthetic* idea of worship is totally opposed to the Saviour's standards, and is the very essence of medieval Catholicism. The Church of Rome, with all her masses, images, processions, soaring naves, stained glass windows, costly and colourful robes, rich music, Gregorian chants, and complex proceedings, makes an offering of worship *by these things*. All her theatricalism is an act of worship believed to be pleasing to God. The spiritual giants of the Reformation turned back to the Bible, unitedly embracing the principle that true worship is intelligent (and scriptural) words, whether said, thought or sung, winged by faith to the ear of the Lord. It is true that little bits of Roman 'theatre' remained in the episcopal churches, but generally speaking the rites, ceremonies, images and everything else that represented a virtuous offering were swept away.

We believe that the Lord trusts us with music and also with instruments to accompany the

singing of praise, but these cannot actually convey worship. They are secondary. They are not in the image of God, nor do they have souls, nor are they redeemed. Modern hymnwriter Erik Routley was way off the mark when he penned the lines (which he meant to be taken literally) –
*Joyfully, heartily, resounding!
Let every instrument and voice . . .
Trumpets and organs, set in motion
Such sounds as make the heavens ring.*

An earlier Anglo-Catholic hymn (by Francis Pott) made the same aesthetic point in these words –
*Craftsmen's art and music's measure,
For Thy pleasure all combine.*

The recently coined, popular statement that worship is 'a celebration in words and music' also breaches the Lord's key principle that worship should exclusively be 'in spirit and in truth'. Words and thoughts are everything in worship. Music may only assist at a practical level; it cannot be used to express worship. To believe that it can is to fall into the tragic error of aesthetic worship. The singing of God's people should certainly be grand and glorious in terms of fervour and effort, but it is the words and the hearts of the worshippers that God desires. All unnecessary embellishment is an offence to Him, firstly, because He has not called for it; secondly, because it is an insolent 'improvement' on what God has laid down; and thirdly, because it is a powerful distraction to spiritual worship. Does this sound strange? It may do so today, but fifty years ago – and all the way back to the Reformation – practically every evangelical Christian would have said this most emphatically.

Aesthetic worship has now flooded into evangelical, Protestant churches as people have been persuaded that they should express much of their worship via music and instrumentation, even through dance, other bodily movements and drama.

A notable advocate of the new ways has defined worship as 'a discovery of God's will through encounter and impact'. Not only is instrumental and song performance offered as a meritorious expression of worship, but from the very performance one is said to glean some form of revelation from God. This is seriously believed by some of the main architects and promoters of new worship. Do evangelicals who partially adopt their materials realise the deep mystical errors that lie behind them? To put it bluntly, aesthetic worship is a huge stride back to

Rome, and has no place in the true church of Jesus Christ. It challenges and spoils spiritual worship, and is contrary to every praise instruction in the New Testament. When we evaluate new worship, we must do so in terms of those biblical principles recovered (by God's mercy) at the time of the Reformation, the first of these being that worship is spiritual, and not an aesthetic performance. At the Reformation, simplicity, intelligibility and fidelity to the Bible replaced the impressive mystery and pageantry of Rome. It has been well said that the aesthetically splendid mass surrendered to the understanding soul.

Why did all this take place? The advocates of new worship do not seem to know. They are aware that the Reformation changed *doctrinal teaching*, but they do not appear to know why it also changed the manner of worship. Do the new-worship men think it was just a 'generation thing'? Do they picture Luther, Calvin, and the Protestant martyrs as the youngsters who just wanted a new culture? Do they believe it was all a matter of taste? The truth is, of course, that the Reformers saw through the sensual worship of Rome and rejected artistic skill and beauty as a valid expression of worship. (They also rejected the 'working up' of supposed spiritual experience by things which entranced the eyes and the ears; but we will speak of these later.)

How has it come about that so many evangelical Christians have adopted the idea that worship includes an offering of beauty and skill? The most obvious reason is that the 'church growth movement' has adopted musical entertainment as *the* chief method of attracting outsiders, and this music has to be justified as part of the worship. Also, in the USA even the sounder theological seminaries and Christian colleges have greatly enlarged their music departments and courses for 'worship leaders'. Inevitably the role of music and the use of complex worship programmes has increased even in conservative circles. Many churches have acquired ministers of music as well as professional worship leaders, and how could these highly trained brethren function if they did not feel that all their expertise and creativity somehow formed part of an efficacious offering of worship?

In biblical worship, only one offering counts, and that is the offering made once for all by the eternal Son of God on Calvary's Cross. Nothing should be thought of as an

acceptable offering, or as having any worship merit, apart from Calvary. Our thoughts and words are not an 'offering', but expressions of praise, thanksgiving, repentance, supplication, dedication and obedience, all made acceptable by Calvary.

Writers promoting new worship actually use language which depicts God as a satisfied viewer of a 'performance' (this is *their* term). They explicitly say that God is the audience. Some, in their books, provide illustrations of a stadium in which the church, with its choir and orchestra, are placed on the pitch, and the word 'God' is inscribed around the seating in the stands. They seem very pleased with this scenario.



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It is salutary to note that C. H. Spurgeon would not have an organ at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in his day, because he saw how some of the larger churches had become carried away by their magnificent instruments, and by the expert capabilities of their organists. They were tickling the ears of the people (as Spurgeon put it) with beautiful musical items other than hymns. He was concerned that people would go to church to be entertained rather than to worship, but even more seriously, he saw how the skill and beauty of the music was itself likely to be regarded as an act of worship, and an offering to God. Today the Tabernacle uses an organ, but we are concerned to keep its deployment within bounds, so that it provides an accompaniment only, and does not become a medium of worship. In this way we express the same convictions about worship as the 'prince of preachers.' We would never say, for example, that the organ 'enriches' worship. It disciplines the singing, and teaches and maintains the tune, but we know very well that in *spiritual* terms it can contribute nothing.

Contemporary worship, however, is fully aesthetic in purpose and practice. God is the audience and the worshippers are performers. Skilful instrumentalism is part of the offering of worship. We repeat, that many evangelical churches have, in this way, gone back to Rome, but they have actually surpassed Rome both in intricacy and decibel count. At the dawn of world history Abel's offering was accepted by the Lord because it was the very act God had commanded – a humble offering representing the need for atonement. Cain's offering, however, was rejected, because it presented his own skill, labour and artistry. It was a 'works' offering. To parade before God our skills as an act of worship is surely nearer to the offering of Cain than that of Abel.

Christians who have begun to savour new worship sometimes ask – 'But what shall we do with our gifts if we cannot express them in worship?' Here is the heart of the matter. Worship is not the exercise of our gifts, but the exercise of our hearts and minds. For many people this is the lost genius of worship, the principle which has disappeared from sight – that worship is not the presentation to God of skill or beauty, or of personal gifts, but the communication of the

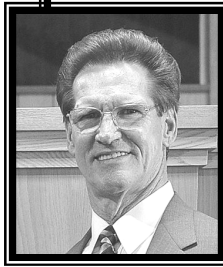
soul with God, through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ alone, and by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Worship is not an aesthetic activity. Incidentally, the desire to 'express our gifts' in worship opens the door to elitism, because not many people have musical gifts to display. Where will it end? If someone's 'gift' is to play the bagpipes, and another's is to play cricket, are we to fit these into the service of worship also?

We ask again, how is it that evangelicals have tumbled into this dramatic change of viewpoint? We have not been helped by a number of practices which have served as the thin end of the aesthetic wedge. We have already noted that a few pre-Reformation features survived even in the reformed churches – remnants of Catholic theatricalism, costumery and show. These have been kept up in Anglican churches (except in the 'low' churches), and they have always had an undermining effect, causing good people to lose sight of a clear-cut definition of spiritual worship.

Over the years, pleasing inconsistencies have also been adopted by nonconformist churches. Beautiful anthems rendered by

(Continued on page 13)

Editorial: Tom Henry The Pre-eminence of God's Glory in Preaching



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WITH RESPECT TO the ordinance of preaching the question that needs asking today is, what is the chief end in preaching? The answer to this important question would depend largely upon whom you might ask.

Modern evangelicals would most likely say that producing results is the main object. **Preach for results** is the charge given to ministerial students in evangelical schools. In fact I remember a course called **Preaching for Results**. The term *results* is a sort of catch word for outward decisions, professions, rededications – folks coming forward at the end of the sermon for whatever reason.

Their idea of preaching for results usually means the skillful use of psychology, “*working the crowd*,” playing on people’s emotion, and most important of all knowing when and how to “*draw the net*,” i.e. give the invitation or altar call. In achieving this desired end, sound Bible exposition is not only considered unnecessary but even counter-productive in most cases. One well-known pastor of a large mega church, who also prided himself in his ability to “get results,” went so far as to say that it really does not matter either what or how well one may preach. The important thing, he said, is that one knows how to give the altar call. He went on to say that he could stand in the pulpit and recite *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, and people would “get saved.” This was, of course, because of his great effectiveness in giving the altar call. Sadly, it seems that an awful lot of modern day evangelicals share his same philosophy.

What, according to Scripture, is to have the pre-eminence in preaching? All of God’s preachers long to see results, to be sure. We long to see *visible* results. For my part, I long to see souls saved, lives changed, sins forsaken, and holiness of life. These are good and desirable. But is this to be the chief end of our preaching? As the Apostle Paul acknowledged, what makes ministers “*Unto God a sweet savour of Jesus Christ*” is **faithfulness to His Word**, and that regardless of what the tangible results may be. (II Cor. 2: 14-17) It is not results that we are to concern ourselves with but rather, faithfulness to truth. “*It is required of stewards, that a man be found faithful.*” As Stonewall Jackson once said, “Duties belong to men, outcomes belong to God.” If we glorify God in our preaching, He will glorify Himself in the results!!

All that God has ordained is for His glory,

and He vows not to share His glory with another. Therefore, since preaching is an ordinance of God, its chief end must be the glory of God.

Paul exhorted Timothy to do what every God-called preacher must do, “**Preach the Word.**” The charge is simple, “**Preach the Word.**” The psalmist David, having vowed to praise and worship God for His loving kindness and for His **truth**, followed with this astounding statement: “*Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy name.*” How can this possibly be? The Word of promise made to David was in his eyes more glorious than all else that he had seen of the Most High. The glory of God’s name is not so clearly read in nature as it is in the Scriptures. The heavens broadly declare His glory. (Psa. 19: 1-3) The whole earth is full of His glory. (Psa. 72:19) These, however, shall pass away; but the Divine Word shall never pass away. The Lord lays all the rest of His name under tribute to His Word. His wisdom, power, love, and all His attributes combine to carry out His Word. Charles Simeon said of this wonderful Davidic statement, “God has sent His Word to us as a mirror to reflect His glory. In the sacred volume all of the glory of the Godhead shines as they never did by any other means.” Let us then preach the Word, so that His excellent glory may shine forth in His mercy and in His truth.

.....
: “If we glorify God in our
: preaching, He will glorify Himself
: in the results!!” —Tom Henry
:

It was particularly in God’s great gospel promise that David saw God’s glory so transcendently magnified. Paul said, “*Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel.*” But what is the Gospel? The Apostle called it “*The gospel of God...concerning His Son Jesus Christ.*” (Rom. 1: 1, 3) He concluded his great Gospel treatise with a grand doxology, of which the last verse reads, “*For of Him, and through Him and to Him, are all things, unto whom be glory for ever. Amen.*” (Rom. 11:36) He called it “*The glorious gospel of the blessed God.*” (I Tim. 1:11) Speaking of

this glorious gospel he said, “*Whereunto I am appointed a preacher.*” (II Tim. 2:11) Paul saw his calling as a dispensation of God’s grace and used it to magnify and glorify the God of grace.

Peter’s apostolic admonition to preachers stresses the Divine aspects of their holy work, and makes the chief goal of preaching the glory of God. “*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen*” (I Pet. 4:11) Peter says that when we preach, we are to preach the Word of God by the gifts and power of the Spirit of God. The result will be the *glory of God*.

It goes without saying that in order to glorify God in the preaching of the Gospel, we must preach a Gospel that gives Him all of the glory. The only Gospel which does this is the Gospel of His free and Sovereign Grace. Though it may be possible to preach such a Gospel without giving God glory, it is not possible that He should be glorified in the preaching of any other Gospel. We are called upon to eulogize God for that blessed Gospel which from the beginning to end is all “*to the praise of the glory of His grace.*” (Eph. 1: 3-6) Thomas Manton, in commenting on Ephesians 1: 6 said, “It is the greatest sacrilege that can be to rob God of His Glory, especially the glory of His grace.” In order that God’s glory be foremost in the preaching of the gospel, we must preach a Gospel in which His grace is seen as glorious.

But what about man’s needs? Are we not to be moved by his pitiful and hopeless condition? We dare not be indifferent to the sinner’s sad state. Jesus certainly was not unmoved when He looked upon them. But we must properly understand what his real need is, and what alone can meet it.

John Piper, in the opening paragraph of his preface to his excellent book, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, makes this statement: “People are starving for the greatness of God. But most of them would not give this diagnosis of their problem. The majesty of God is an unknown cure.” We acknowledge that there are many more popular prescriptions being marketed by preachers who themselves do not understand the problem. Nevertheless it is certain that preaching that does not exalt the greatness and Sovereign Majesty of God may go down easy, but will not touch the hidden cry of the

(Continued from page 12: Tom Henry)
soul: "Show me Thy glory."

It does not matter if surveys turn up their lists of perceived needs, which do not include the need to see the greatness and glory of God in the preaching of His Sovereign Grace. It is only in this way that they shall ever hope to see "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Cotton Mather, who ministered in New England over 300 years ago said, "The great design and intention of the office of a Christian preacher is to restore the throne and dominion of God in the souls of men." This was his accurate and exegetical conclusion

from one of the great texts of Scripture, which goes to the heart of preaching. (Rom. 10: 14, 15)

So, even though God's glory always trumps man's need as being the chief end in the preaching of the Gospel, both of these ends are simultaneously accomplished when the former is given the pre-eminence. The truth of the matter is that God's deepest commitment to be glorified and man's deepest longing to be satisfied meet in the Gospel.

The glory of God is of infinite worth. It is the heart of what the Apostle preached: "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (II Cor. 4:6) It is

the goal of every Christian act. "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (I Cor. 10:31) It is the focus of all Christian hope. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. 5:2) God's glory will one day render the sun and moon unnecessary, for it will be the all-glorious eternal light of the heavenly city. "And, the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it." (Rev. 21: 23) It is God's glory that must be first and foremost in the preaching of the Gospel. We are called to be "stewards of the mysteries of God." (I Cor. 4:1) The great mystery is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27) That glory is the glory of God. ●

(Continued from page 11: Peter Masters)

choirs came to offer an increasingly aesthetic contribution to worship. Solo items in services seemed harmless enough, and edifying if worshippers followed the words. But then the solo often became an instrument-only item, so that congregations were given 'songs without words', and taught to regard these as acts of worship. Such practices have helped nibble away at the biblical concept of worship, so that the Lord's people have gradually lost sight of basic principles. By now, these have disappeared into oblivion, and the judgement of believers has become completely confused. More recently, simplicity has come under full-scale attack, and performing gifts exalted.

It may be protested that worship in Old Testament times was rich in actions and artistry ordained by God, and such worship can hardly be disqualified today. How can

we deny the worship-virtue of skilfully executed music and song? But it is not true that Old Testament services included works of beauty and skill as a direct expression of worship. The symbolism in the design of the Tabernacle and Temple, as well as the ceremonial performed by the priests, represented the work of Christ for them. These things amounted to *lessons*, not vehicles of worship. They were intended as visual sermons, not meritorious acts. They were pictures, given and taught by God, of the way of grace. The people observed and trusted, but their personal response of praise was meant to be spiritual and from the heart. True worship has always been a matter of the heart. We again urge readers to consider this central principle of worship, because how we worship is not just a matter of culture or taste or generation, but a matter of God-given rules. Principles count. The great statement common to the Westminster and Baptist Confessions of the 17th century stands

against all that is going on today: "The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself; and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imagination and devices of men . . ."

It may help to conclude these pages on *Spiritual or Aesthetic Worship?* with a simple test question. Why would a church wish to increase or elaborate upon its customary instrumentation, and change its style of worship? If the answer is - 'To enrich our worship and to express our gifts,' then it will show that the principle of 'spirit and truth' has been lost, and the old aesthetic error has got in. ●

¹This extract comes from *Worship in the Melting Pot*, chapter 2, I, "Three Broken Principles" by Peter Masters. Published in 2002 by Wakeman Trust, ISBN 978 1 870855 33 4.

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Prescriptions Not to be Altered

"The prescriptions of a physician must not be altered, either by the apothecary or the patient; so we, the preachers, must not alter God's prescriptions, neither must you, the hearers. We must not shun to declare, nor you to receive, 'The whole counsel of God.'" (Spurgeon's quote from Thomas Manton)

It is as much as a man's soul is worth to alter a word of the Lord's own writing: to take away from the book, or to add to it, is forbidden; and threatened with the heaviest penalties.

It is not ours to improve the gospel, but to repeat it when we preach, and obey it when we hear. The gospel, the whole gospel, and nothing but the gospel, must be our religion, or we are lost men. Imagine a dispenser altering the ingredients of a medicine to suit his own notions! We should soon have him on trial for manslaughter; and surely he would deserve to be tried on a still higher charge should a patient die through his folly. The gospel prescription is such that an omission or an addition may soon make that which was ordained to life to be unto death. We may not

attempt to be wiser than God, for the idea involves constructive blasphemy. No, it is ours to follow the copy to the letter, come what may of it.

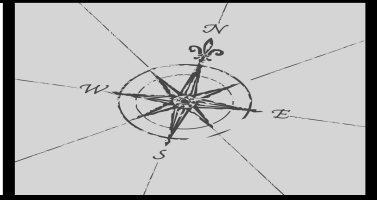
Lord, in my teaching I have ever kept that thou hast said; and therefore men think me old-fashioned, and behind the age. Give me grace to continue so. Never may I aspire to practice a new pharmacy, but may I faithfully dispense thine ancient and unvarying prescription of salvation by grace through faith.

—C. H. Spurgeon

*From "Flowers From A Puritan's Garden"
Sprinkle Publications, Harrisonburg, VA*



World Missions



Brazil and the work of **Richard Denham**




Rich and Pearl Denham in Brazil, South America, a Portuguese speaking country.

Biography: A heart for missions led James Richard Denham, Sr. and his wife Aletha to China after World War II. When China closed its doors to foreigners, they went to Argentina to study missions. To return to the States, the Denhams chose the inland route, traveling 600 miles by boat up the Madeira River and some 900 miles down the Amazon. They inquired about Christians at every port along the Madeira, but not a single Christian was reported by the locals. Their burden for that vast, spiritually barren field was shared by son Rich (James Richard Denham, Jr.) and wife Pearl who in 1952 sold their few possessions, left the pastorate of a church in Oregon, and joined Rich's parents in founding an Amazonian mission.

After Pearl's health failed twice in the tropics, the couple moved south to São Paulo (the industrial hub of Brazil's rapidly growing economy) and began the publishing ministry Editora FIEL. A gift from Banner of Truth Trust made possible the first of more than 170 books since published by this ministry. In the 1980s the Denhams moved to the city of São José dos Campos where they and two other families founded Grace Baptist Church. Seeing a need to train church leaders and spread the doctrines of grace throughout the Portuguese-speaking world, Rich also started the FIEL Conference for Pastors and Leaders, Adopt a Pastor Project and "Faith for Today" magazine. Today, Rich and Pearl (both born in 1927) are still very active in the ministry of FIEL.

Editora FIEL (Faithful Publishing House) is a Brazilian non-profit religious organization that partners with **Christian Literature Advance**, a South Carolina-based non-profit mission. FIEL seeks to spread among Portuguese-speaking peoples worldwide the truths of biblical Christianity, the contours of which have been shaped by the doctrines of sovereign grace, gave birth to the Reformation and center upon the glorious redeeming work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and only Mediator between God and man.

The Fiel Conference: Yearly conferences in Brazil (25yrs), Portugal (10yrs) and Mozambique (9yrs) gather together pastors and church leaders (1,300 attendees in Brazil, 60 in Portugal, and 200 in Mozambique) for five days of intensive training and spiritual fellowship. The conferences serve as a

melting pot for national and international speakers and authors, whose collective teachings--which by themselves have blessed many lives outside the conference--edify and encourage those in attendance. While the teachings themselves expound the truths advanced in FIEL's literature, they are taught as a forum for similarly-impassioned church leaders to latch arms with one another, reinforcing these battle-weary soldiers for Christ. The conferences are a lighthouse to pastors in nations where many churches have obscured sound biblical teaching with the prosperity gospel and pragmatic methods.

Running alongside the pastor's conference is FIEL's college-age conference. The crux of this conference is to teach sound biblical truths to the next generation of spiritual leaders in the more informal setting of a camp site. Brazil is currently in its 6th year of hosting this conference. Please join us in prayer for these conferences; that through them the Lord might bring living water by way of teaching and encouragement to thirsty pastors, church leaders and college students throughout the Portuguese-speaking nations of the world.

Faith for Today: "Faith for Today" is a magazine dedicated to the promulgation of the great truths that spawned the Reformation. The magazine contains carefully selected articles written by God's servants from past and present generations to encourage pastors to hold fast to the unchanging truths of the Word. This quarterly magazine is mailed free of charge to over 22,000 pastors, seminary students and church leaders in Brazil, Portugal and Mozambique. The cost to publish and distribute each edition is approximately US\$12,000 and is funded entirely by faithful gifts of churches and individuals.

In a day when many churches abandon the simple preaching of Scripture and replace it with entertainment and self-fulfillment, our goal is to reach Portuguese-speaking pastors and leaders with sound Biblical content in a format that can be easily distributed. It is our hope that as we sow this seed in these nations, the Lord will cause some to fall on fertile soil and bear fruit. Our plan by God's grace is to follow up with books, conferences and when possible the Adopt a Pastor project.

Adopt a Pastor Project: In our 55 years of mission-field experience from a pioneer boat ministry on the Amazon River to church planting and publishing in Brazil's modern cities we have become increasingly aware that the greatest need of the Brazilian church is for national leadership grounded in the often neglected Biblical truths that spawned the Reformation. Many churches have fallen into doctrinal error for want of leadership grounded in sound Biblical doctrine. To help meet this need, FIEL initiated the Adopt a Pastor project, where a sponsor helps provide tools to impact a pastor's life and ministry.

Through donations of US\$30/mo (\$360/yr), AAP provides an adopted pastor with ministerial help by sending him one book a month (sponsors are provided a yearly report with the names of these books) and enabling him to attend FIEL's annual conference. An additional \$15/mo (\$180/yr) allows his wife to accompany him there. Sponsors are always welcome to attend the conference and meet their adopted pastor. AAP commits to maintaining a pastor in the project for at least three years. By sponsoring a pastor, you will be blessed by seeing the fruit in the life of the pastor, his family, and his flock. Pastors are encouraged to send bi-monthly letters to their sponsors. Most of these pastors are without the guidance of sound teaching. A Brazillian pastor wrote: "I have seen through this ministry the possibility for change in the evangelical churches of Brazil and even in our society." This hope encourages us to press on even in the face of adversity. There are still victories to be won!●

This material taken with permission from www.editorafiel.com. To learn more about the growing Sovereign Grace work in Brazil and to support Bro. Denham's ministry, please visit Editora Fiel's website.. —ed.

www.editorafiel.com

Report from India Prem Waghmare

Recovery from illness: Prem reports that God has answered the prayers of His saints by granting him healing and recovery from the Dengue virus. He asks for continuing prayer for health for himself and his co-workers that they might continue to glorify God and his Son in and through the lives of the saints.

Evangelistic efforts: "We also appreciate your faithful prayers for the work here in Nagpur. The Lord is mighty in saving souls! He has been stirring up within us a renewed desire for the salvation of the unsaved and for the growth of those who are saved. My co-worker, Bro. Raju, and I along with our brethren, have been traveling every week to various towns and villages. What a blessing to see the power and faithfulness of our God when He visits with His salvation! A good number of folks are testifying of the joy and working of God's grace in their soul. Even in the midst of much opposition from their family and friends, they are learning to trust Christ alone, and are willing to confess Him openly before the public (Psalm 110:3)"

A new arrival to the Waghmare family: "We are grateful to our God for little Sarah who was born on December 7th, 2009, weighing about 7.2lbs. She is of a great joy to us all. Pray that we may be found faithful in raising these little ones in the fear and admonition of our Lord."

The continuing legal situation: "Please also continue to uphold my court situation before the Lord and that His name will be honored in and through this ordeal. I was first given a court date in December, and then in January, and as of yet there is no answer in sight. Our hope and expectation is upon our Lord. Psalm 62:5 says "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.""

In closing, we want you all to know how grateful we are to our God for your partnership. May the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you and yours.

For Christ and His kingdom,

Prem & Anita Waghmare and children

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**Trip to Guyana, John Hunter
(January 12-20, 2010)**

When asked to write a little about my recent and brief return to Guyana, I do so with very mixed emotions. The whole concept of a proper theology of missions is involved. We are all aware of the commission we call “the Great Commission” in Matthew 28:18-20 in which we are called to teach in verse 19 and to continue that teaching in verse 20 until there is a conformity to all of Christ’s teaching but the “example” and “how to” of the commission are really displayed in the call and missionary journeys of Paul.

Acts 13:1-5 provides the information that teaches us of the intimate involvement of the local church in the commissioning and sending of the missionary as well as the missionary’s primary responsibility “they

preached the word of God”. The pattern of direct local church involvement is the pattern through out the New Testament.

The actual missionary journeys of the rest of the book of Acts and the direction of the Pauline epistles flesh-out the rest of the nature of Biblical missions. To be sure Paul saw the need to establish local churches as the key to real evangelism that fulfilled all of the Great Commission.

All of this has been said in order to explain my “mixed emotions” in returning to the scene of my earlier ministry. It was a joy to see the folks from the churches, the constituting of a new church and the men that I had trained, or had a hand in training. Each of the men seemed to be continuing to grow.

What disturbed me was that they were not being allowed to take over in the churches

nor were the churches being allowed to become Biblically independent of foreign control via the ties to foreign—in this case American—money. In order to have effective future evangelism there must be local church leaders of high quality functioning by independent means. To keep these churches and men dependent on U.S. funds is counterproductive. To fail to let them “take over,” which does risk mistakes, is also counterproductive and arrogant on the part of missionaries or other seniors who think they know best as if they were the exclusive possessors of the Holy Spirit’s guidance.

It is time to rethink our missions goals—to go about missions with truly Biblical goals. It would be productive to have a meeting of Sovereign Grace Baptist Churches to discuss the whole work of missions.

The Road to Indonesia, Paul Snider

I want everyone to know that I am overjoyed at what God has accomplished thus far in our journey. To be called to take His gospel to the most remote, unreached place on earth is not a sacrifice but a privilege. This privilege Trish and I do not take lightly. We are honored that God would entrust us with His gospel. We are zealous to proclaim His Excellencies in Indonesia. We are earnestly longing for the day to step on the field. I often tell churches when I speak that I am happy to be here, but at the same time I am not happy to be here. Our heart is in West Papua.



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After our return from Indonesia in March 2009, we have been traveling to many churches sharing our passion for Christ and the unreached tribe in West Papua. The word commonly used among missionaries that are on the road traveling and sharing the work that God has called them to is **deputation**. We have been on deputation for 9 months and have seen God work mightily among His people to partner with us in the effort to be part of the Great Commission.

I can truly say that I have seen God provide in ways that are astounding. Currently, Trish and I have our outgoing funds met, and are at 55-60% supported. Trish and I are blessed to have Bethany Bible Church as our sending church. They have supported every effort and are actively behind every step we take in our journey. I want to especially

thank them for their sending us and their love for us. I want to thank every church that we have been to these past months. I truly have seen in these churches genuine believers that love the gospel and want to see it reach the unreached.

We just returned from a 2 week trip where Johnson and I spoke at 11 churches in 12 days. All together we traveled over 5,000 miles. We traveled from Minnesota to Missouri then Texas, and five states later ended up in Georgia, and finally I finished the month of January in Ohio.

It is true, it is tiring being away from home and putting so much of your energy into sharing what you have a passion for, but I would not have it any other way. This is a significant time of preparation and God is allowing us to speak to a number of people across the country that are interested in long-term missions. Missionary zeal is contagious! I was affected by missionaries as they would come and speak when I was younger. It is vital that we encourage and challenge people that have a desire or calling to GO.

Jesus said Matthew 9:37-38, “*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.*” Pray with us, pray earnestly with us that the Lord will raise up and send out “many” workers.

Please pray for our partners, & Johnson as they are settling back for their second term. Pray that the Lord will grant a return to Indonesia next year.

Article Removed for Security Reasons

Spurgeon on the Glory of the True Tabernacle

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)



C.H. Spurgeon
1834-1892

THERE WAS A TIME when God freely communed with men. The voice of the Lord God was heard walking in the garden in the cool of the day. With unfallen Adam the great God dwelt in sweet and intimate fellowship; but sin came and not only

destroyed the garden, but destroyed the intercourse of God with His creature man. A great gulf opened between man as evil, and God as infinitely pure; and had it not been for the amazing goodness of the most High, we must all of us forever have been banished from His presence, and from the glory of His power. The Lord God in infinite love resolved that He Himself would bridge the distance, and would again dwell with man; and in token of this He made Himself manifest to His chosen nation Israel when they were in the wilderness. He was pleased to dwell in type and symbol among His people, in the very center and heart of their camp. Do you see yonder tent with its curtains of goats' hair in the center of the canvas city? You cannot see within it; but it was all glorious within with precious wood, and pure gold, and tapestry of many colors. Within its most sacred shrine shone forth a bright light between the wings of cherubim, which light was the symbol of the presence of the Lord. But if you cannot see within, yet you can see above the sacred tent a cloud, which arises from the top of the Holy of Holies, and then expands like a vast tree so as to cover all the host, and protect the chosen of God from the intense heat of the sun, so apt to make the traveler faint when passing over the burning sand. If you will wait till the sun is down, that same cloud will become Alimonies, and light up the whole camp. Thus it was both shade and light; and by its means was enjoyed that safety which was afterwards set forth in the promise, *"The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night."* Over all the glory was a defense and a comfort. The Lord dealt not so with any nation, save only His people Israel, of whom He said, *"I will dwell in them, and*

walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

The day of the type is over; we see no more a nation secluded from all others and made to be as *"the church in the wilderness."* God doth not now confine His abode to one people; for *"The God of the whole earth shall he be called."* There is now no spot on earth where God dwells in preference to another. Did not our Lord say, at the well of Sychar, *"Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father."* *"But . . . the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth"*? Wherever true hearts seek the Lord, He is found of them. He is as much present on the lone mountain's side as in the aisles of yonder above, or in the galleries of this tabernacle. *"Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool; what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?"*

Yet there is a true house of, a real temple of the infinite, a living abode of the Godhead. The epistle to the Hebrews speaks of *"the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."* There is still a trysting-place where God doth still meet with man, and hold fellowship with him. That place is the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, *"in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."* The manhood of Christ is become to us the anti-type of that tent in the center of the camp. God is in Christ Jesus; Christ Jesus is God; and in His blessed person God dwells in the midst of us as in a tent; for such is the force of the original in our text. *"The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled, or tented, among us."* That is to say, in Christ Jesus the Lord dwelt among men, as God of old dwelt in His sanctuary in the midst of the tribes of Israel. This is very delightful and hopeful for us: the Lord God doth dwell among us through the incarnation of His Son.

But the substance far excels the shadow; for in the wilderness the Lord only dwelt in the abode of man, but now His approach to us is closer, for He dwells in the flesh of man. *"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."* Note that word *"flesh."* It doth not say, *"The Word was made man"*: it means that, but the use of the word *"flesh"* brings the Lord Jesus still closer to us, and shows that He took on Him the very nature and substance of manhood: He did not merely assume the name and notion, and appearance, of manhood, but the reality: the weakness, the suffering, the mortality of our manhood He actually took into union with

Himself. He was no phantom, or apparition, but He had a human body and a human soul. *"The Word was made flesh."* When the Lord became bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, His incarnation in a human body brought Him far nearer to man than when He only abode within curtains, and occupied a tent in the midst of Israel.

Moreover, it is to be noted that God does in the person of Jesus not merely dwell among men; but He hath joined Himself unto men—the Word not only dwelt in flesh, but *"was made flesh."* It is impossible to use words which are exactly accurate to describe the wonderful incarnation of the Son of God in human flesh; but these words are used to show that our Lord is as truly and as really man as He is God. Not only does God dwell in the body of man; but our Lord Jesus is God and man in one person. He is not ashamed to speak of men as His brethren. *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same"* with us. This approach to us is exceeding close. God was never one with the tabernacle, but in Christ Jesus He is one with us. This union hath in it a sweetness of sympathy, a tenderness of relationship, and a condensation of fellowship greatly to be admired. Now we listen to the music of that blessed name Emmanuel, *"God with us."* In the person of the only begotten, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we see God reconciling the world unto Himself. Let us rejoice and be glad that we have in Jesus more than Israel had in the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. The ancient believer gazed upon the sacred tent, he thought of the holy place of sacrifice, and the Holy of Holies, the inner shrine of the Lord's indwelling; but we have unfeignedly more, we have God in our nature, and in Him *"truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."*

In and around the tent wherein the Lord dwelt in the center of the camp there was a manifestation of the presence of God. This was the glory of that house: but how scanty was the revelation! A bright light which I have already mentioned, the Shekinah, is said to have shone over the mercy-seat; but the high priest only could see it, and he only saw it once in the year when he entered with blood within the veil. Outside, above the holy place, there was the manifest glory of the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night. This sufficed to bear witness that God was there; but still, cloud and fire are but physical appearances, and cannot convey a true appearance of God, who is a spirit. God

(Continued next page)

Abiding in God's Providence

Mary Silverberg

I TAKE great comfort in God's providence. He is good and kind, and a merciful God who only allows what is good to come my way (Romans 8:28). I trust that he has an honorable purpose in sending diabetes into our lives. I accept it as from his hand, and he enables me to abide with this present affliction. *He* is how I do it. *He* is how I manage. He is how I live, and move, and have my being (Acts 17:28). He is my dearest friend. All my sorrows are known to him, and not one comes my way that he does not allow. He is a true friend who never does any wrong. He is always there to ease my burden, and he cares for me (1 Peter 5:7). In times of joy and especially trouble, he is with me, offering his peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7).

It is abiding—that is living abundantly—in Christ, and resting in God's sovereignty, that enables me to give thanks and praise to God through life's crises. I remember when Jason was paralyzed from the hips down. I was happy he had an interest in music. He enjoyed piano and especially the violin. If something had happened that had prevented his full recovery, he could still pursue his musical interests and make a profession out of them if necessary. It was a huge blessing, but the Lord also sent many daily gifts our

way, and to overlook God's small mercies would have been a shame.

On one occasion Jason had just been home from the hospital maybe a day or two. I took the doctor's prescription to the licensing department and came home with a handicap license tag. "Look what I got!" I said with a smile on my face as I revealed the object that was to ensure a close parking place wherever we went. The whole family, including Jason, cheered as I danced around the living room with the tag. It was a happy time, and very uplifting to rejoice in God's tender mercies, even in great affliction.

There is no doubt about it. Diabetes has been a trial in our lives, but looking to the Word of God for understanding and comfort has been our stay. When the boys have questioned me as to why they have this disease, or why God allowed this to happen, I am free to tell them that I don't know why, but I do know that God is in control, and he only does what is right.

When the boys were young, they each had had their moments of distress over this burden, and I didn't deny their feelings of sadness, but we didn't complain about it either. I would put my arms around them and hold them. "I am so sorry," I would console them. "I wish I could make it go away. Yes, it is hard, and I would take it for you if I

could." After some cuddle time, I would pray with them, and we could always think of many things to be thankful for, and we would both be comforted.

I honestly believe it is the influence of the Word of God in our lives that has given the boys such a good attitude concerning their diabetes. All three accept it and live happy, even healthy lives. I can't think of one area in their lives that has been denied them because of their disease.

One day I was talking with my oldest son. He is eighteen now and has been diabetic since age two. It's all he's ever known. He has done so well with his disease, both physically and emotionally. I suggested to him that he could do a really great job helping others to deal with their diabetes. Maybe he could speak at a support group meeting. His response was definitely not what I expected. He didn't think he'd be all that great at it. When I pursued the topic, he said, "I just don't think it's that hard. What would I say? *Get over it?*"

Often I do not understand God's providence, but there are times when it is clear. Zachary was born just a year after Jason, and unless you've had two children that close together, especially boys, I don't think you can fully grasp just how hard it is, but I loved them dearly and was so very happy to have them.

(Continued from page 17: Spurgeon)

cannot be perceived by the senses; and yet the fiery, cloudy pillar could appeal to the eyes only. The excellence of the indwelling of God in Christ is this—that there is in Him a glory as of the only begotten of the Father, the moral and spiritual glory of the Godhead. This is to be seen, but not with the eyes; this is to be perceived, but not by the carnal senses: this is seen, and heard, and known, by spiritual men, whose mental perceptions are keener than those of sight and hearing. In the person of the Lord there is a glory which is seen by our faith, which is discerned of our renewed spirits, and is made to operate upon our hearts. The glory of God in the sanctuary was seen only by the priest of the house of Aaron; the glory of God in the face of Christ is seen by all believers, who are all priests unto God. That glory the priest beheld but once in the year; but we steadily behold that glory at all times, and are transformed by the sight. The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is not a thing of outward appearance, to be beheld with the eyes, like the pillar of cloud and fire; but there is an abiding, steady luster of holy, gracious, truthful character

about our Lord Jesus Christ, which is best seen by those who by reason of sanctification are made fit to discern it. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; yea,

In Christ Jesus, the Lord dwelt among men as God of old dwelt in His sanctuary in the midst of the tribes of Israel. This is very delightful and hopeful for us: the Lord God doth dwell among us through the incarnation of His Son.

-C.H. Spurgeon

they do see Him in Christ Jesus. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Many of us besides the apostles can say, "We beheld his glory, the

glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." We have not seen Jesus raise the dead; we have not seen Him cast out devils; we have not seen Him hush the winds and calm the waves, but we do see, with our mind's eye, His spotless holiness, His boundless love, His superlative love and truth, His wondrous heavenliness; in a word, we have seen, and do see, His fullness of grace and truth; and we rejoice in the fact that the tabernacling of God among men in Christ Jesus is attended with a more real glory than the mere brilliance of light and the glow of flame. The condescension of Christ's love is to us more glorious than the pillar of cloud, and the zeal of our Lord's self-sacrifice is more excellent than the pillar of fire. As we think of the divine mysteries which meet in the person of the Lord, we do not envy Israel the gracious manifestation vouchsafed her when "a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord covered the tabernacle;" for we have all this and more in our incarnate God, who is with us always, even to the end of the world. ●

Zachary was a delight. His personality was very different from Jason's, and yet they blended so well together.

Jason was still a toddler when he became diabetic, so he never left the house without me or my husband, but the time came when he would have been old enough to play in the backyard, or out in the field, or down by the creek by himself, if it hadn't been for his diabetes. However, with Zachary so close in age, and experienced with Jason's insulin reactions, I could send the two of them off together, confident that Zach would help Jason or come get me if needed, and that's just what he did, on more than one occasion.

I remember one day in particular. Jason and Zach were out playing in the snow while I was at home in the cozy house with my little ones. Zach came storming through the front door, and burst out, "Jason's low. He needs help!" I ran to the kitchen and grabbed a (sweet) soda, threw on my coat, and slipped my tennis shoes on, not even bothering with socks. I raced after Zach through a snow-covered field, not even feeling the ice on my ankles or the cold air whipping through my unzipped coat. Jason was lying in the snow, not able to get up by himself, let alone walk. As I gently coaxed him to drink the soda, his condition reminded me of a happy drunk. After a few minutes of sipping, I carried him home to finish recovering in the warmth of our house.

I was thankful that Jason and Zach were such good buddies and so close in age, and that I could count on Zach to be there for his brother. I'm afraid Jason might have been a mama's boy, or at least stuck at home a lot more if it hadn't been for Zach. If I was ever tempted to wonder why God had given us these boys so close in age, I had my answer. Zach was great for Jason, and Jason in turn for Zach, and later both brothers for Nathan, as they had set such an outstanding example of living with diabetes. After all, he had seen them living a wonderful life.

Nevertheless, I think on the whole, this disease has been the hardest on my youngest

son, but I have witnessed Nathan's childlike faith and believe he has come to accept God's providence.

For a while, when Nathan was about ten years old, the two of us had gotten into the



Mary Silverberg is the mother of six children, three of whom have Juvenile Diabetes. Her book chronicles her emotional struggles and triumphs with the disease and offers practical help in its care

habit of having a special time together reading the Bible and praying, just the two of us. On one particular occasion it was Nathan's turn to pray first. He was thanking the Lord, listing usual things small and great, mostly stuff I had heard before, and then he said something so surprising that it seemed to jolt my very being. "And Lord, thank you for my diabetes." I don't think I heard the rest of his prayer. I was so dumbfounded. I could hardly believe my ears. My mind immediately raced back to Sunday's sermon.

Our pastor had preached on thankfulness in trials and thankfulness for trials because they are meant for our good, and to bring us closer to Christ. Well, I know I heard the sermon, and I think I understood it, but I certainly hadn't applied it to my life. I had tried to teach my children and set an example

of being thankful in all things, but it had never occurred to me to be thankful for the trial of diabetes itself, even after I heard that sermon—at least not until my ten-year-old son had simply prayed a prayer of thankfulness to God for his diabetes.

Now it was my turn to pray, and I had a big lump in my throat. My eyes were tearing up, and I couldn't speak. I wasn't able to bring myself to thank God for this trial. Yet, my son had done it, and certainly it was just as trying, if not more so, for him. I remember thinking, *I'm the grown-up here. I'm supposed to be more spiritually advanced. How is it that he is okay with this, and I'm not?* The hard truth of the matter was I hadn't totally accepted the affliction, and the Lord chose the prayer of a small child to point that out to me. The silence was growing, and I knew Nathan was waiting for me to pray. I managed to stumble through a short prayer, thanking the Lord for his mercies and asking him to forgive my sins, and to help me submit to his will, but I really desired time on my own to examine my thoughts and to seek the Lord.

I have since come to peace with God's providence in sending diabetes into our lives. I take great comfort in knowing that he has a purpose in everything he does. I don't always understand it, but I do know that his ways are higher than my ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). There are times when this disease seems difficult for me, but I know that God will not tempt me above that which I can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13), and he is faithful to deliver me of my struggles when he sees fit. In times of weakness or despair, I know I can turn to him who is a friend that is closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24), and I rest in his sovereignty. ●

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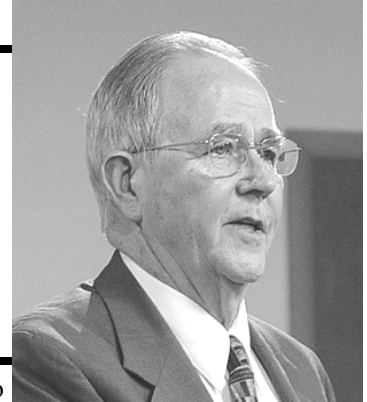
Mary Silverberg is currently working on a book that spans the broader topic of special needs children to offer help and encouragement to other families who share this struggle. She is looking for Christian mothers or grandmothers of special medical needs children to participate on the project with her. You may contact Mary at marysilverberg@yahoo.com for more information.

THE MEANING AND MANIFESTATIONS OF THE GLORY OF GOD

ARE OF VITAL INTEREST TO THE SAVED OF JESUS CHRIST. BEING THE LEADING FACTOR IN ALL OF GOD'S WORKS, BOTH IN NATURE AND IN GRACE, IT BEHOOVES US TO SEEK TO LEARN AS MUCH OF THIS ESSENTIAL TRUTH OF GOD'S CHARACTER AS IS POSSIBLE. TWO LONG TIME VETERANS OF THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD, PASTOR TOMMY ANDERSON OF SOVEREIGN GRACE CHURCH, GLEN ALLEN, VIRGINIA AND PASTOR HOLMES MOORE OF BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI WERE GIVEN FIVE IDENTICAL QUESTIONS REGARDING THE MEANING AND MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD'S GLORY. PASTOR ANDERSON HAS BEEN IN THE PUBLIC MINISTRY FOR OVER 59 YEARS AND HAS BEEN PASTOR OF SOVEREIGN GRACE CHURCH FOR OVER 50 YEARS. PASTOR MOORE HAS BEEN IN THE MINISTRY FOR OVER 50 YEARS AND HAS BEEN PASTOR OF BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH FOR OVER 46 YEARS. —EDITOR



TOMMY ANDERSON IS PASTOR OF SOVEREIGN GRACE CHURCH OF GLEN ALLEN, VIRGINIA. FOR MANY YEARS HE CONDUCTED A BIBLE INSTITUTE TO THE BENEFIT OF MANY STUDENTS.



HOLMES MOORE IS PASTOR OF BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI. IT WAS LARGELY THROUGH HIS VISION AND INSTRUMENTALITY THAT THE SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP WAS FORMED.

1. What is your understanding of the meaning of God's glory in the Scriptural sense?

(Tommy Anderson) The glory of God is revealed in measure by whatever way He is pleased to show Himself or reveal something of His character, as in the works of creation or in the divine revelation of Scripture, in the majestic manner of the giving of the Law at Sinai, but in the highest sense in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Exodus 33:18-19; Psalm 19:1;2; John 1:14; Corinthians 4:6). We can only perceive the glory of God as it is revealed, which means that it is discerned in how He acts or what He does. We are not capable of beholding the essence of God's glory. His majestic greatness, perceived by those who are born from above, is beheld in His superiority over all in His purpose, deeds, and infinite understanding. His glory, discerned by faith and spiritual understanding, is in *"His eternal power and Godhead,"* displayed in the work of creation and the sustaining of all things created (Romans 1:19-20). This glory, as Paul taught in Ephesians 1:6, is the greatest end purpose of salvation; of His electing grace before the foundation of the world; of His sending His Son to die for and redeem His chosen; of the Spirit of God regenerating them to faith in Christ. All is to *"the praise of the glory of His grace."*

(Holmes Moore) In the A.V. the words most usually translated *"glory"* are *"bod"* in the Hebrew, meaning weight or heaviness, and *"doxa"* in the Greek, although a number of other words are also translated in the original.

"Glory" thus has reference to the attributes of God's perfection. Properly it is the exercise and display of what constitutes the distinctive excellence of the subject of which it is spoken; thus, in respect to God, His glory is the manifestation of His divine attributes and perfections, or such a visible effulgence as indicates the possession and presence of these (Exodus 33:18-19; John 1:14, etc.). God's glory is the correlative of His holiness - it is that in which holiness comes to expression. Glory is the expression of holiness as beauty is the expression of health.

By a very natural extension, the term *"glory"* is used for the property

of possession itself, which tends to throw around its subject a halo of glory, or in some respect to crown it with honor; as when the glory of man is identified with his soul; the glory of Lebanon with its trees (Isaiah 60:13a); the glory of herbs with the beauty of their flower (Isaiah 40:6); the glory of God with His infinite perfections, and especially with His pure and unchanging righteousness or holiness (Isaiah 3:8;42:8). In the last sense God is the glory of His people (Jeremiah 2:11), because He is the living root and spring of all that distinguishes them as good.

If we think of God as a Great Wheel, then the spokes of the Wheel would be His various attributes. The hub, or center of that Wheel would be His chief attributes, righteousness and holiness. These chief attributes are manifest in the Saviour God gave for the salvation of His people, in the way of salvation and redemption of His people, and shall be eternally manifest in the union of His people with the Divine Saviour, the Lord of all Glory!

2. What are some of the ways God manifests His glory?

(Holmes Moore) The nineteenth Psalm tells us, *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handywork"* (vs. 1-6). All things God has made to manifest His glory, but especially the created order which was brought forth out of nothing, and is upheld even now by the power of His glory. Even though the creation lies presently under a fog of vanity because of sin (Romans 8:19-22), the glory of God's creation still shines through.

The Psalmist goes on to tell us how the glory of God is manifest in His Law (Psalm 19:7-11). Although the revelation of God's nature is most abundantly clear in the things that are made, yet because of man's sin and consequent blindness of heart, this **glorious revelation of nature** is cloaked and thus hidden by the darkness of man's understanding. Therefore, a further revelation of **God's nature and ways is given in God's holy Law.**

We are told in brief compass of the **perfection** and **power** of God's Law, how that its statutes comprise all righteousness, being a reflection of God's very nature! By teaching the *"Fear of the Lord,"*

God's Law leads the life toward **cleanness** and **righteousness**, making the divine Law *more valuable than much fine gold and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb!*

When the Law of God is well used and properly applied, it leads the believing soul into a private and pious walk with God! (Psalm 19:11-14) In this walk with God the soul is more and more warned of sin in the life and given a deep desire to keep God's commandments and to keep back even from secret faults and presumptuous sins. How sweet are the fruits of a private devotion to God! *"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer"* (Psalm 19:14).

(Tommy Anderson) God's glory is manifested in the outworking of His eternal plan for man purposed before the creation of the material universe and thus before the Adamic fall, which brought sin and death into the human race. Since the glory of God is manifested in whatever way He is pleased to reveal something of Himself or His character, the absolute faithfulness of God to His own eternal purpose involves a demonstration of His glory. Moses spoke of *"this fearful and glorious name, THE LORD THY GOD"* (Deuteronomy 28:58). The name of God in Scripture involves a revelation of His character, sometimes in one aspect and sometimes in another. Then the doing of God's pleasure, or bringing to pass of His eternally designed purpose, is a manifestation of His glory. For instance, in Psalm 115:1 the inspired Psalmist writes, *"Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."* That this glory involves the bringing to pass of His purpose, sometimes called *"pleasure"* in Scripture, is in the same Psalm demonstrated in the great truth that *"our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased"* (Psalm 115:3). As involves God's eternal purpose for man, both the salvation of God that manifests His grace and the damnation of sinners that shall manifest His perfect justice are manifestations of His glory.

3. How is the glory of God revealed "in the face of Jesus Christ," as in 2 Corinthians 4:6?

(Tommy Anderson) I would be in agreement with the comment of John Owen on this. He writes: "We have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Still it is supposed that the glory of God, as essentially in Him, is invisible unto

us and incomprehensible by us. Yet is there a knowledge of it necessary unto us, that we may live unto Him, and come unto the enjoyment of Him. This we obtain only in the face or person of Jesus Christ, for in Him that glory is represented unto us... They saw *'His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth'* (John 1:14). The divine glory was manifest in Him, and in Him they saw the glory of the Father."

(Holmes Moore) *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* The Apostle Paul tells us that as the creative glory of God shown out as a result of the divine fiat, *"Let there be light,"* even so the redemptive decree of God beamed forth from *"the face of Jesus Christ."* This latter day light is that of the *"Gospel,"* as it is preached unto men and witnessed by God in the human heart.

The Apostle John further testifies, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"* (John 1:1). *"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shined out of darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"* (John 1:4-5). John would have us to know that the Word was eternal, even from the beginning. Make that any beginning you please! Before God created the material Universe, before He made angel or man, **the Word already was!** More astounding yet is the revelation that **the Word was equal with God the Father!** He is said to be *"with God,"* as an equal, and that He *"was God!* Every divine attribute that God the Father displayed, so did the Word.

The culmination of all this glorious mystery is found in verse 14: *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."* When Christ is preached in the Gospel as the eternal Word made flesh, as the *"glory of the only begotten of the Father,"* as the Word *"full of grace and truth,"* so *"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"* shines forth.

4. What relationship does the glory of God have to salvation?

(Holmes Moore) The relationship between the glory of God and man's salvation is made clear in Romans 3:23: *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*

We read in Genesis, the Book of beginnings, chapter one, verses 26-28, *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."*

In the beginning the glory of man consisted in his conformity to God and His glory. Man was created in the image and likeness of God. This was not a physical likeness, for God had not a corporeal body. Man's likeness to God was moral and spiritual: this was man's glory, to be thus like God.

Yet *"man in honour abideth not."* The serpent insinuated himself into the garden, deceived Eve, and got Adam to sin against God **with eyes wide open!** With sin came the introduction of death into our race, and with death the loss of God's glory. Instead of man exercising dominion over himself and the world, all things now ruled over him.

As man came forth from the hand of his Creator, before his nature was ruined and bruised by the Fall, he can be thought of as a three-storied building, comprising upper, middle and lower stories. The upper story can be considered man's spirit, the middle story man's soul, and the lower man's body. In man's unfallen state, the spirit related primarily to God, and directed his entire being. His soul made him self-conscious, and his body made him conscious of this world. All three parts of man worked in harmony with each other, and all were subject to God.

The Fall can be thought of as a terrible calamity, causing, as it were, the upper story of man's being to crash into the middle story, and both the upper and middle to fall into the lower story. Thus man's entire being was made subject to his body and a slave to the world, the flesh and the devil. This continued to be man's sad state under sin, waiting for the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

(Tommy Anderson) Scripture uniformly and with no uncertain tone attributes salvation to the sovereign will of God as to its cause: the will of God the Father purposing it, as in Ephesians 1: 5, *"having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself,*

according to the good pleasure of his will:" the work of God the Son alone accomplishing redemption, as in Ephesians 1:7, "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." the will of God the Holy Spirit applying it by regenerating the chosen and redeemed unto faith in Christ, as in John 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth (chooses and wills), and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Since the whole cause of salvation is only in the sovereign will of God, the end and goal of salvation could only be to the glory of God and in no way to the glory of the creature. Scripture declares plainly that it is "to the praise of the glory of his grace" (Ephesians 1:6), so that "no flesh shall glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:29-31).

I think of how God was glorified in the salvation of an aged man, who was saved by the wondrous grace of God alone and was then displayed before many people. Over fifty years ago this elderly man was converted under my ministry. A year later he died. His pastor and I conducted his funeral service in a church north of Lynchburg, Virginia, in the community where he had grown up. The people there could hardly believe that he had been converted. All who knew him during that last year of his life knew he had a glorious conversion.

5. How does the glory of God manifest itself in the believer?

(Tommy Anderson) As the Lord Jesus, who alone could say, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9b), the Lord

Jesus Christ is called in Hebrews 1:3, "the brightness of his (the Father's) glory." The way the believer manifests the glory of God is in his or her reflection of Christ and insofar as he or she is changed into His image. It is only as the believer sees the glory of God in Christ and continues to look to Him, in the Word and Gospel God gave, and insofar as the change is taking place by the work of the Holy Spirit that the believer is enabled to imitate the Lord Jesus so that the glory of God is reflected in the outliving of the new life in Him. So Paul taught in 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

It becomes the believer's purpose to glorify God through faith, as Abraham was "strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Romans 4:20). This life of faith is outworked in practical obedience, as is also said of Abraham, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11:8). Faith without obedience to the Word of God is not the faith revealed in Scripture and certainly not the kind of faith that glorifies God. The Shorter Catechism got it right: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

(Holmes Moore) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Romans 8:16-21) Here is one Biblical description of the restoration of the glory of God to the sons of God and to the entire creation. We are first told that this is the heritage and hope of the sons of God, to whom the Spirit now bears witness. Next we are encouraged by the fact that our sufferings now with Christ are not "worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Lastly, and perhaps most surprisingly, we are told that the whole creation is waiting for our glorification so that it too may be delivered from the bondage of corruption along with the children of God. So the deliverance of the creation is tied together with the final salvation of God's children.

Short of our final glory, we receive in this life a partial transformation into the image of Christ, as "we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18). The reference here is probably to one of the highly polished metal mirrors such as were in vogue in Egypt, Pompeii, and throughout the Roman world. Among the numerous articles used by fashionable Jewish women of Isaiah's time were "hand mirrors:" used for "well set hair" (Isaiah 3:23,24). Evidently these worldly daughters of Zion, that is "Zion women," carried vanity cases as women do today, and a polished bronze mirror is apparently implied.

The Word of God is our mirror by daily use of which we are able to behold the glory of the Lord, and not only to behold it, but also "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." •

July 26-30, 2010 (Monday - Friday)

**Sovereign Grace Youth Camp
held in Conway, Missouri at Camp Beth Eden**

To see pictures from last year's camp, you can go to the group "Sovereign Grace Youth Camp" on facebook.com. It will be updated as information including cost, speaker, activities, and registration forms becomes available.

Contacts: Tim Nehrbass 303-404-8949 or Terry Boyer 636-274-4264

Sovereign Grace Bible Conferences

April 20-22, 2010

Spring Sovereign Grace Bible Conference Bible Baptist Church, St. Louis, Missouri

Holmes Moore, pastor
Tom Henry, assistant pastor

Tuesday, April 20

Morning

10:00 AM - Kyle White
11:00 AM - David King

Evening

7:00 PM - Dean Olive
8:00 PM - Gene Breed

Wednesday, April 21

Morning

10:00 AM - Jeff Pollard
11:00 AM - Ron Staley

Evening

7:00 PM - Jim Gables
8:00 PM - Mark Webb

Thursday, April 22

Morning

10:00 AM - Dean Olive
11:00 AM - Larry Dean

Evening

7:00 PM - Conrad Murrell
8:00 PM - Jeff Pollard

Devotional and prayer at 9:00 A.M. each day of the Conference, led by Conrad Murrell.

David King will be speaking on April 18, before the Conference.

Two meals a day, each day of the Conference, are provided by Bible Baptist Church for all who attend. Dinner follows the morning sessions. Supper is served before the evening services at 5:30 PM.

For information on accommodations in the St. Louis area, contact the church office at: (314) 645-4248

June 22-24, 2010

Calvary Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, Arkansas Warner Worthan, pastor

There will be two morning services, June 22-24; two evening services, June 22-23 (No evening service on last day). Conference ends after Thursday lunch.

Recommended Motels: Comfort Inn (870) 535-5300; Super 8 (870) 540-0008; Holiday Inn (two locations), Adjacent to Pines Mall (870) 534-1810, Watson Chapel ((870) 879-3800. Watson Chapel Holiday Inn nearest the ladies' tea and the ice cream social.

For more information, contact Pastor Warner Worthan. Phone: (870) 879-9612 Email: wrworthan@gmail.com

October 25-29, 2010

Grace Baptist Church, West Milton, Pennsylvania David King, pastor

Pastor David King has announced the dates for the Sovereign Grace Bible Conference at Grace Baptist Church of West Milton, PA as Monday evening through Friday morning, October 25-29, 2010. For further information, contact Pastor King at: (570) 742-8915.

The Quilt Project



The Quilt Project began under the leadership of (name removed for security reasons) to help Indonesian women who lost the support of their Muslim families when they confessed faith in Christ. They make beautiful, high quality quilts (like the one shown here) that would normally sell at much higher prices in the U.S. Please consider supporting these converts by purchasing one of their fine hand-crafted pieces.

Information on quilt designs, sizes and pricing may be obtained by contacting Jeannie Henry in St. Louis, Missouri at (636) 677-6241 or emailing her at bbcinstl@aol.com.

This is a non-solicited and non-compensated announcement.

Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship



July 12-15, 2010

Special Annual Meeting of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Association and the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

Hosted by:

Pastor Art Alexander and Immanuel Baptist Church, 2775 Harding Highway, Lima OH 45804

The keynote speaker for the 2010 conference will be pastor and author **TOM WELLS**. He will open the conference at **8:00 pm** on **Monday, July 12** with the first in a series of 4 messages on New Covenant Theology.

TUESDAY

July 13

- 9:00 am **LARRY DEAN** *Limited Atonement*
Bridgetown Baptist Church, Nesbit, MS (SGBF)
- 9:45 am **ART ALEXANDER** *Council of Dort*
Immanuel Baptist Church Lima, OH (SGBA)
- 11:00 am **JOHN HUNTER** *Unconditional Election*
Missionary/former pastor Grace Baptist Church, Anniston, AL (SGBF)
- 7:00 pm **TOM WELLS** *New Covenant Theology II*

WEDNESDAY

July 14

- 9:00 am **FRED LEUCK** *Evangelism*
Thornville Baptist Church Metamorah, MI (SGBA)
- 9:45 am **GARY LONG** *Irresistible Grace*
Sovereign Grace Baptist Church. Springfield, MO (SGBF)
- 11:00 am **JERRY LOCHER** *Sanctification*
Sovereign Grace Baptist Church. Swartz Creek, MI (SGBA)
- 7:00 pm **TOM WELLS** *New Covenant Theology III*

THURSDAY

July 15

- 9:00 am **RON STALEY** *Perseverance of the Saints*
New Hope Baptist Church, Mechanicsville, VA (SGBF)
- 9:45 am **RON SHINKLE** *Total Depravity*
Lemoyne Baptist Church Genoa, OH (SGBA)
- 11:00 am **TOM WELLS** *New Covenant Theology IV*

Lunch will be served on Tuesday and Wednesday
Dessert will be served during a time of fellowship
after each evening session

The regular annual Fellowship business meeting
will be conducted during one of the free afternoon
periods.

Please email **Ron Shinkle**, chairman of the
Sovereign Grace Baptist Association, at
rwshinkle@gmail.com for further details.

Check out the SGBF website: www.sovereigngracebaptistfellowship.org

If you are not on the mailing list and desire to receive *The Sovereign Grace Messenger*, add another recipient to the list, have a change of address, or would like your name removed, please send your name and address to:

The Sovereign Grace Messenger
c/o Ron Staley, editor
New Hope Baptist Church
5452 Spotslee Circle
Mechanicsville, VA 23111
(One copy per family please)

**You may phone or email your name
and address to:**

(804) 321-2110
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